

Message Text

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SUBJECT: PUBLIC SECTOR COLLECTIVE BARGAINING - IV

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1. SUMMARY. REACTIONS TO THE "SOCIAL AGREEMENT" (SEE REFTEL) REACHED BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT AND THE CONFEDERATION OF TURKISH TRADE UNIONS (TURK-IS) TO PROVIDE GUIDELINES FOR COLLECTIVE BARGAINING IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR HAVE FOLLOWED ALONG PARTISAN LINES. SUPPORTERS OF PRIME MINISTER ECEVIT AND HIS REPUBLICAN PEOPLES' PARTY (RPP) GOVERNMENT STRESS THEIR CONVICTION THAT THE "DEMOCRATIC LABOR LIFE OF TURKEY" WILL BE FOSTERED BY THE AGREEMENT AND THAT JOINT ACTION BY THE GOVERNMENT AND THE TRADE UNIONS IS NECESSARY IN PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES. POLITICAL AND TRADE UNION SPOKESMEN OF THE RIGHT AND THE FAR LEFT IN AN UNUSUAL ALIGNMENT OF FORCES HAVE DENOUNCED THE AGREEMENT. END SUMMARY.

2. SPEAKING FOR THE LEFT-WING CONFEDERATION OF TURKISH REVOLUTIONARY/REFORMIST TRADE UNIONS (DISK), SECRETARY GENERAL FEHMI ISIKLAR EXPLAINED THAT DISK REJECTS THE AGREEMENT BECAUSE IT REFLECTS CLASS RECONCILIATION INSTEAD
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OF CLASS STRUGGLE. HE AGAIN ACCUSED TURK-IS OF PURSUING "YELLOW UNIONISM", THAT IS ABANDONING THE WORKERS' RIGHTS AND CONCEDING TO EMPLOYERS' INTERESTS AND ADDED THAT SUCH AGREEMENTS ARE BOUND TO REMAIN VALID ONLY ON PAPER. DISK

ATTITUDES WERE REFLECTED IN STATEMENTS FROM THE FIVE FAR-LEFT SOCIALIST PARTIES - THE TURKISH LABOR PARTY, THE TURKISH SOCIALIST

WORKERS PARTY, THE TURKISH TOILERS PARTY, THE TURKISH WORKERS AND PEASANTS PARTY, AND THE SOCIALIST REFORMIST PARTY - WHICH DEPLORED THE ECEVIT/TUNC AGREEMENT.

3. PRIME MINISTER ECEVIT STILL WANTS DISK CONCURRENCE WITH THE AGREEMENT AND TOLD A NEWS CONFERENCE ON JULY 22 THAT THE GOVERNMENT WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO ACCORD BETTER ECONOMIC TERMS TO UNIONS WHICH REMAIN OUTSIDE THE AGREEMENT. HE URGED A CONTINUING DIALOGUE WITH DISK IN ORDER TO WARD OFF POTENTIAL DIFFICULTIES. IN RESPONSE TO THE PRIME MINISTER AND OTHER PRESSURES FROM WITHIN THE RPP, DISK PRESIDENT BASTURK REPORTEDLY HAS CALLED A MEETING OF REPRESENTATIVES OF DISK AFFILIATES IN EARLY AUGUST TO REVIEW THE MATTER FURTHER.

4. MUSTAFA BASOGLU, A JUSTICE PARTY MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT AND PRESIDENT OF SAGLIK-IS (HEALTH WORKERS' UNION, AN AFFILIATE OF TURK-IS), ISSUED A STATEMENT THAT THE AGREEMENT IS AGAINST THE INTERESTS OF TURK-IS AND WILL ASSIST DISK TO BECOME STRONGER. HE ADDED THAT HE WAS APPLYING FOR THE TURK-IS MANAGEMENT BOARD TO HOLD AN EXTRAORDINARY MEETING TO REVIEW WHAT HE CLAIMS ARE UNAUTHORIZED ACTIONS BY TURK-IS PRESIDENT TUNC. TUNC IN TURN HAS REPLIED THAT THE SAGLIK-IS PRESIDENT IS THE ONLY TURK-IS LEADER AGAINST THE AGREEMENT AND THAT ALL OTHER UNION LEADERS WERE KEPT FULLY INFORMED AND WERE FULLY CONSULTED BEFORE THE FINAL AGREEMENT WAS REACHED WITH PRIME MINISTER ECEVIT.
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5. MEANWHILE, OMER FARUK AKINCI, PRESIDENT OF MISK, THE CONFEDERATION OF NATIONALIST TRADE UNIONS (AFFILIATED WITH THE NATIONLIST ACTION PARTY), ACCUSED TURK-IS AND THE GOVERNMENT OF TRYING TO HIDE THE TRUE INTERESTS AND RIGHTS OF THE WORKERS. "WE ARE AGAINST IT," HE CONCLUDED.

6. SIMILARLY, THE NATIONAL SALVATION PARTY (NSP) AND ITS AFFILIATED LABOR WING HAK-IS DENOUNCED THE AGREEMENT AS DANGEROUS TO TURKISH LABOR LIFE. NSP PRESIDENT ERBAKAN ACCUSED THE GOVERNMENT AND TURK-IS OF TRYING TO FREEZE WAGES AT THE SAME TIME AS THEY WERE PROMISING UNLIMITED BENEFITS FOR THE WORKERS IN THE YEAR AHEAD. HE DISMISSED THE MATTER "AS AN INDICATION THAT THE RPP GOVERNMENT'S LIFE WILL BE SHORT."

7. THE CONFEDERATION OF TURKISH EMPLOYER ASSOCIATION (TISK) HAS INDICATED THAT IT CONSIDERS THE AGREEMENT TOO LIMITED. TISK ADVOCATES A NATIONAL WAGES AND INCOMES POLICY COVERING ALL SECTORS OF THE COMMUNITY, PUBLIC AND PRIVATE.
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